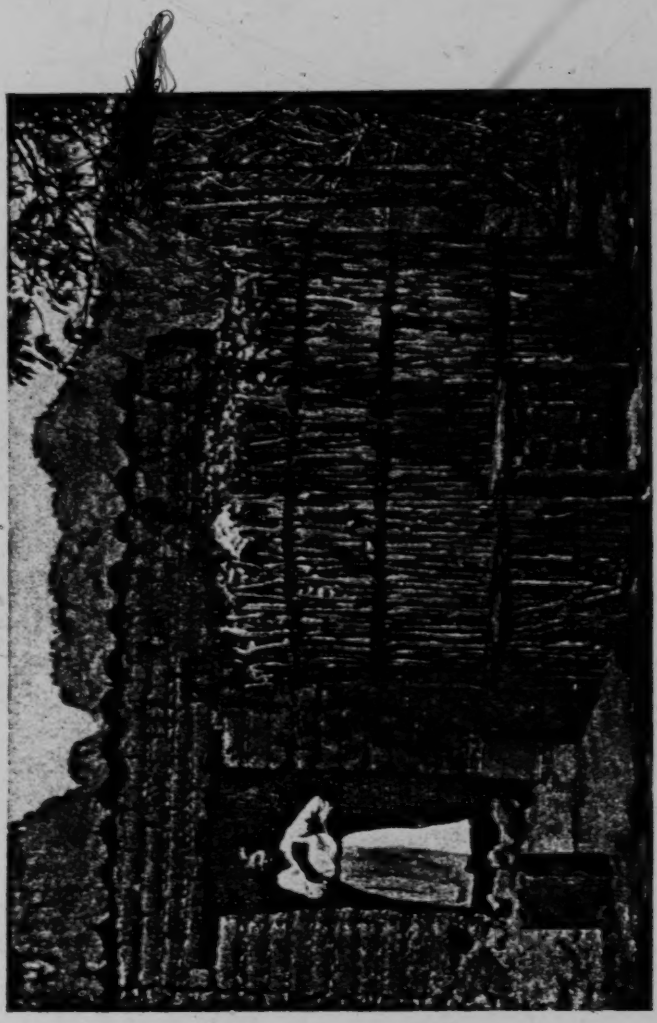
1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37



251
342
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OHUATLAPIL: *HUACALES* AND *BOTES* IN THE FOREGROUND

[facing page 33]

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

another at right angles to the first until a structure is raised tall enough to contain the maize to be stored. The *cuezcomate* (N. *cuezcomatl*) is a vasiform granary, plastered inside and out with clay. In it is kept shelled corn.

Perhaps every fourth dwelling has a sweathouse (S. *temazcal;* N. *temazcalli*), well known as a part of the pre-Columbian house group. This is made of stone set in mortar. It is rectangular, approximately square, and about five feet high at the center. The roof is low peaked. The one entrance is barely large enough to permit entrance of a man on hands and knees. Although occasionally now used merely to achieve cleanliness, its use, as in pre-Columbian times, is chiefly therapeutic.

These are all indigenous features. Although bees and turkeys were domesticated before the Conquest, it is not clear to what extent the beehive—a simple wooden box—and the fowlhouse preserve pre-Columbian elements. The fowlhouse (S. *gallinero;* N. *pizcalli*) is a part of nearly every domestic establishment (but in many homes some of the chickens perch on ladders in a corner of the dwelling). It is usually built of stone, to keep out marauding carnivores, and has about the size and form of the sweathouse, except that the roof is tiled. To protect a horse or *burro* a thatched or tiled roof is erected in a corner of the yard. Something in which to store water completes the house group. This is either a plastered tank (S. *pila*) or a large jar (S. *tianja;* N. *acomitl*) or merely an alcohol tin.

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

Neglecting for a moment the additional furnishings of the more urbanized and well to do, one may declare the domestic equipment within the house to be almost entirely pre-Columbian. The kitchen is the center of domestic activity, and around it cluster most of the accessories. Four features are inevitably present in all houses, of whatever poverty or pretensions. These four features vary hardly at all in form or position,[1] and preserve, hardly modified at all, pre-Columbian form and function. These four are the hearth, the griddle, the grinding-stone, and the pot. The hearth (S. *tlequil;* N. *tlequilitl*) is sometimes no more than three stones set in a triangle to support the griddle; but more often it is of many stones, plastered, and horseshoe shaped. Upon it fits the griddle (S. *comal;* N. *comalli*), a flat, circular tray, which occurs in only one diameter (about eighteen inches). Although griddles of iron are common in the cities, in Tepoztlán they are always of clay. When not in use the griddle stands on edge at the back of the *tlequil.* The three-legged grinding-stones (S. *metate;* N. *metlatl*) with their long handstone (S. *metlapil;* N. *metlapilli*) are of the well-known pattern. They are of andesite. The pot in which the maize is cooked (S. *olla de nixtamal;* N. *nexcomitl*) stands beside the hearth.

In some houses the *tlequil,* which burns wood, is supplemented by the brazier (S. *brasero*) of Spanish origin. This burns charcoal. It may be of iron and brought from the city, or it may be a homemade copy

[1] Cf. Bandelier, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Starr, *Notes on the Ethnography* . . . . , p. 3.

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

252 in stone and clay. Only a small part of cookery in [354] Tepoztlán is done on the brazier.

Most of the other articles which contribute to culinary technique are Indian, not European. The [412] small andesite mortar (S. *molcajete;* N. *molcaxitl*) and the pestle (S. *tejolote;* N. *texolotl*) are used chiefly for grinding *chile*. Two of the three common forms of 285 basket are likewise pre-Columbian in general char- 415 acter. These are the forms without handles: the *chiquihuite* (N. *xiquihuitl*), which is stiff, as wide as it is deep, and coiled on splints; and the *tompiate* (N. *tompiatl*), which is flexible, twice as deep as it is wide, and woven of soft reed. The other basket, which is of the shape of an ordinary European market basket, with a handle, has no Nahuatl name (it is always called *canasta*), and is apparently a form introduced [177] by the Spaniards. Its principal use is in marketing; [482] therefore it is carried only by women, and on the left arm under the *rebozo*. The whole forms a *canasta-* [562] *rebozo* minor complex of post-Columbian development.

The other two baskets are used for the storage and [251] transport of food (the *chiquihuite* is also used to strain [252] honey), and may be carried by either man or woman.

177 Mexican pottery has been much modified since the Conquest. Many forms are European, and the ware is 323 in general inferior. Shell-decorated Cuernavaca pottery is common in Tepoztlán, and there are occasional pieces of glazed and painted Oaxaca ware. The ware in general use in cookery is the plain ware of Toluca. [415] The pot (S. *olla;* N. *xoctli*) preserves the ancient form;

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

142
291
302
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412
415
516
252
342

KITCHEN: SHOWING *TLEQUIL, COMAL, METATE, METLAPIL, OLLA DE NIXTAMAL,* AND *BATEA*

[facing page 36]

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

the pitcher (S. *jarro*) and the saucer (S. *cazuela*) are more European than Indian and are mentioned by the Spanish names only.

Minor elements in the culinary paraphernalia are the shallow wooden boat-shaped mixing bowl (S. *batea*), the wooden spoon (S. *batedor*), and the small, rectangular, handled fan (S. *aventador*) with which the fire is blown up. For picking fruit from trees a cage-like picker of cane, on the end of a long pole, is employed. This is called (S.) *canastilla* or (N.) *acatecomatl*.

Other house furnishings vary considerably with the wealth and education of the owner. Characteristically, however, the bed (S. *cama*; N. *tlapechtli*) is a mat (S. *petate*; N. *petlatl*) spread on the ground or on a low wooden platform. Often another aboriginal form of bed is used: splints of Mexican *bambú* (S. *otate*; N. *ohtlatl*) are stretched in both directions across a framework of low posts driven in the ground. Tables are common but often absent in poorer houses. The backed chair is not rare, but much commoner is the low, backless bench. Although occasionally reminiscent of the pre-Columbian *icpalli*, it nevertheless is generally European in form. No adult sleeps in a hammock, but babies are usually cradled in a flat, swinging framework which is homemade. This resembles other Indian cradle-frames, but bears the Taino name *hamaca*.

Certain domestic accessories of European origin have become firmly associated with the aboriginal elements and are always found in the house. Chief among these are the steel knife, the small iron kerosene flare

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

177 (S. *candil*), the candle, and the alcohol tin (S. *bote*) in
[354 which water is carried and stored. Two of these tins
415 are yoked together and swung over the shoulder. In
482 this device (S. *aguantador*), of course European in
562] character, water is hauled by the men. A woman carries only a single tin.

178 A domestic shrine is found in most houses. This may
352 be no more than a printed or painted picture of a saint, but more commonly it is a carved and painted wooden figure, usually a Virgin or a Christ. This may be only a few inches high, or as much as six feet. Most are from early Colonial times. In front of this figure
782 an incense burner (S. *sahumeria;* N. *popochcomitl*) is
178 placed. This is of black glazed pottery. In it copal
352 gum is burned. Flowers are also placed before the figure, in bottles or vases, and pictures of other saints are hung near the image. This shrine is the center of domestic worship and ritual. Candles are burned before it on feast days; here the infant Christ is "put to bed" on Christmas Eve and taken up on Candlemas;
[527 before this image are placed gifts brought on birth-
584] days or those brought by a boy's parents during the negotiations leading to a marriage with a daughter of the house.

353 Any property not in use is kept on plain wooden shelves or in covered wooden chests. Extra clothing is hung on nails. Walls are frequently decorated with pictures cut from newspapers, with sentimental picture postcards, and with little clay toys and ornamental dishes brought from other villages.

1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927) 1930
NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

Nevertheless a very large part of transport takes place on human backs with the aid of aboriginal devices. Burdens are supported with the aid of the forehead tump-line (S. *mecapal;* N. *mecapalli*), which is sometimes assisted by another line across the chest. Articles are carried either in the *chiquihuite*, which is then bound to the *mecapal* by means of the *ayate* (N. *ayatl*),[1] a tough, coarse-woven cloth of maguey fiber, or else in the *huacal* (N. *huacalli*), a crate of rough-hewn sticks. Water is carried in a hollow gourd (S. *bule;* N. *atecomatl*), supported by a lacing of leather thongs. Women, as has already been said, carry purchases or small belongings in the *canasta*, or occasionally in a long rectangular fiber bag (S. *bolsa*). Men never carry these, but use for the *machete* or other possessions a small flat, square bag of vegetable fiber, the *morral* (S.).

Of musical instruments, recognized by the Tepoztecans as such, all are European: guitar, flute, saxophone, cornet, etc. Ritual music is sharply distinguished and ordinarily not called music. Of instruments employed for this purpose the horizontal wooden double-slotted drum (*teponaztli*) is entirely pre-Columbian. One of the two *teponaztlis* remaining in Tepoztlán has every appearance of being an actual pre-Columbian artifact. The *huehuetl*, the vertical drum with the skin head, which in Mexico is a commoner survival than the *teponaztli*, does not occur in

[1] On the use of the *ayate* among the Otomi see Starr, *Notes on the Ethnography of Southern Mexico*, p. 8.

2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

291

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[412]

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2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

Today

almost every house has a hearth made of three stones set in a triangle, or of stones plastered in the shape of a horseshoe, to support the griddle. It is no longer always located on the floor, but is frequently raised to almost table-height by means of a cement platform. The use of platforms has been stimulated by the cultural missions that have visited the village and demonstrated to the more interested and enterprising women some ways of improving their homes. The *brasero*, a raised clay stove with two or three charcoal-burning iron grates on top, is generally still found only in better-to-do homes and is used sparingly or only for preparing fiesta meals. The *comal* (griddle), which in Redfield's time was always clay, is now frequently iron, and many families own one of each type. Though the *comal* is still an indispensable utensil in every home, the increasing consumption of bread, especially for breakfast and supper, makes it somewhat less used than formerly. The same is true of the *metate* (grinding stone), since almost all women now have their corn ground at the mill. But every home has one or more *metates* for re-grinding mill-ground corn and for emergencies. *Metates* are also used for coffee and for large quantities of chile for fiestas. Despite the commercial mills, no Tepoztecan woman would set up housekeeping without her own *metate*. Finally, the *olla*, mentioned by Redfield, is the clay pot in which the maize for tortillas is cooked. To this utensil must be added the pot for beans, another for coffee, and another for meat. Most families have one large pot to retain the water in which maize has been soaked and cooked, and the water needed to moisten the woman's hands as she makes tortillas. This water, which contains some nourishment, is then fed to the pigs.

The remaining house furnishings are relatively few; they consist mainly of sleeping equipment, religious articles, and various containers for storage. For sleeping there are three kinds of beds: the *petate* or straw mat placed on the floor; the *tepexco*, a raised bed of bamboo sticks tied together and placed on a wooden frame or on two sawhorses; and a brass or iron bedstead with metal springs over which a *petate*, rather than a mattress, is generally placed. The great majority of the population sleep either on the floor or on the *tepexco*, and only 19.29 per cent sleep on a bed or cot.[4] The proportion of those who sleep on a bed or cot for Mexico as a whole is far greater (61.1 per cent), and even for communities of 10,000 or less inhabitants it is 53.4 per cent.[5]

The majority of Tepoztecans sleep on the floor because they lack the funds to buy beds, but most of the older generation, regardless of their economic status, sleep that way by preference. Many an acculturated family has sought without success to accustom the old mother or grandmother to sleeping on a bed. Some old people are afraid of falling off during the night, others say that to sleep off the ground is to be more subject to *los aires* (evil winds). One old woman told her grandchildren that it is better to sleep on the floor because it is closer to mother

[4] This figure was derived from a special tabulation of census data for Tepoztlán taken from the Mexican Census of 1940.

[5] Whetten, *Rural Mexico*, p. 291.